

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of provisioning a network device with network settings, comprising:
determining a network settings configuration for allowing the network device to join a network, wherein the network settings configuration includes at least a network name and a network encryption key;
generating an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file including the network settings configuration; and
writing the XML file to a portable computer-readable media device.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the network encryption key is automatically generated.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the network settings further include wireless network settings.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the network settings configuration includes collecting data from a user.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the network settings configuration includes using an application program interface (API) of an operating system to determine the network settings.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the portable computer-readable media device is a universal serial bus (USB) flash drive.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the network settings configuration is further for allowing the network device to join a peer-to-peer network.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the network settings configuration is further for allowing the network device to join a domain-based network.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the network settings have a time to live, and are invalid after the time to live has expired.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising reading a device configuration describing the network device from the portable computer-readable media device.

11. A portable computer-readable media device for provisioning an electronic device with network settings, the portable computer-readable media device having stored thereon data comprising:

an XML file containing a network settings configuration for configuring the device to join a network; and

an autorun file for prompting the device to automatically apply the network settings configuration.

12. The portable computer-readable media device of claim 11, wherein the portable computer-readable media device is a USB flash drive.

13. The portable computer-readable media device of claim 11, wherein the network settings include at least one of wireless configuration settings, local area network settings, wide area network settings, and broadband modem settings.

14. The portable computer-readable media device of claim 11, further comprising multiple versions of the network settings configuration.

15. The portable computer-readable media device of claim 11, further comprising an application for configuring the portable computer-readable media device, wherein the application executes on a computer connected to the portable computer-readable media device.

16. The portable computer-readable media device of claim 11, further comprising a device configuration file describing device-specific information.

17. A method of configuring a device for operation in a network, comprising:
detecting the installation of a portable computer-readable media device;
based on the step of detecting, automatically uploading a configuration from the portable computer-readable media device, wherein the configuration includes network settings and device configuration information;
applying the configuration automatically to the device; and
joining the device to the network.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the configuration is embodied in an XML file.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the portable computer-readable media device is a USB flash drive.

20. The method of claim 17, further comprising writing a device configuration file describing the device to the computer-readable media device.